

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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R 301336Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5311

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LUSAKA 0843

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR RH ZA

SUBJ: RHODESIAN GOVT DENIES COMMITMENT TO UNCONDITIONAL MAJORITY
RULE

1. LOCAL PRESS MARCH 30 CARRIES STORY DATED SALISBURY WHICH

SETS OUT NINE CONDITIONS FOR GRANTING MAJORITY RULE. STORY IS
BASED ON STATEMENT RELEASED BY RHODESIAN GOVT.

2. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THE STATEMENT SAYS THE BELIEF HAS
GROWN UP SINCE MEETINGS TOOK PLACE BETWEEN VORSTER, SMITH AND
KISSINGER LAST YEAR THAT RHODESIA HAS AGREED THERE WILL BE
MAJORITY RULE IN TWO YEARS. THIS BELIEF IS WRONG. RHODESIAN
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GOVT. HAD ACCEPTED MAJORITY RULE AS PART OF A PACKAGE DEAL.
THE TWO YEAR PERIOD STARTS WHEN AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT IS SET
UP. "THERE IS NO COMMITMENT TO UNQUALIFIED MAJORITY RULE IN
ISOLATION."

3. STATEMENT SPELLED OUT NINE OBJECTIVES OF THE RHODESIAN
GOVT.

AS THEY RELATE TO A SETTLEMENT AS FOLLOWS:

- TO NEGOTIATE A CONSTITUTION WHICH MUST EFFECTIVELY GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF MINORITY GROUPS IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY CANNOT BE ABOLISHED OR RENDERED INEFFECTIVE.
- TO GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF ALL CITIZENS BY ENSURING THAT A POLICE FORCE WILL BE MAINTAINED.
- TO ENSURE THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY.
- TO GUARANTEE SECURITY THROUGH ARMED FORCES OWING ALLEGIANCE ONLY TO THE STATE AND NOT TO A POLITICAL PARTY OR INDIVIDUAL.
- TO GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS.
- TO PRESERVE THE CIVIL SERVICE.
- TO ENSURE ECONOMIC STABILITY, PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND PROPERTY OWNERSHIP.
- TO PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.
- TO AGREE ON A CONSTITUTION IN WHICH ALL RHODESIANS WILL BE DEMOCRATICALLY AND FAIRLY REPRESENTED.

4. ASKED WHY THE STATEMENT WAS ISSUED AT THIS TIME, THE RHODESIAN SPOKESMAN SAID THAT, IN LIGHT OF OWEN'S IMPENDING VISIT, IT WAS A GOOD TIME TO SPELL OUT FOR THE RHODESIAN PEOPLE THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION.

5. TIMES OF ZAMBIA CORRESPONDENT COMMENTS THAT POLITICAL PARTIES INSIDE RHODESIA SEE THE RELEASE OF THE STATEMENT AS AN EMBARRASSMENT TO SMITH AND AN ATTEMPT TO STOP HIM FROM MAKING ANY FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO THE NATIONALISTS. STATEMENT WAS MADE WHILE SMITH WAS ON A WORKING HOLIDAY IN SOUTH AFRICA.

6. COMMENT: THE TIMING OF THE STATEMENT AND ITS CONTENTS ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AN INDICATION OF THE GROWING PROBLEMS SMITH IS HAVING TO KEEP HIS RHODESIAN FRONT IN LINE. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION IN LUSAKA BETWEEN TWO INTERPRETATIONS. THE STATEMENT COULD BE READ AS A DECLARATION OF WAR BY THE RIGHT WING OF THE RF ISSUED IN SMITH'S ABSENCE AND PRESAGING A CONFRONTATION AT THE PARTY CONGRESS WHICH WE UNDERSTAND TO BE SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 18. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE HERE, SMITH WILL HAVE A REAL BATTLE ON HIS HANDS AT THE CONGRESS WHICH HE IS NOT AT ALL CERTAIN OF WINNING. THE OTHER INTERPRETATION IS THAT THE STATEMENT WAS ISSUED WITH SMITH'S KNOWLEDGE AND APPROVAL AND THAT IT IS DESIGNED BY HIM TO WIN SUPPORT AT THE CONGRESS. THE NINE POINTS ARE INTENDED TO REASSURE RF PARTY MEMBERS UPSET BY RECENT CONCESSIONS TO BLACKS ON LAND OWNERSHIP AND DISCRIMINATION AND BY THE PODGORNÝ VISIT. ITS AIM IS TO MAKE CLEAR THAT SMITH DOES NOT INTEND TO SELL OUT THEIR INTERESTS IN TALKS WITH OWN OR THE NATIONALISTS. EMBASSY PRETORIA WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE ABLE TO THROW MORE LIGHT ON THIS. LOW

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